

Message Text

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 03700 131044Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 HA-05 ISO-00 H-01 TRSE-00 INSE-00 VO-05
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 /054 W
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P 131034Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7748
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 03700

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, TW, VM, US
SUBJECT: FURTHER DEMARCHE ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES
REF: STATE 140875

1. ON MONDAY, JUNE 12, ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSELOR FOR
CONSULAR AFFAIRS I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER
SHEN AND MADE DEMARCHE AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL. I PARTI-
CULARLY EMPHASIZED DISTURBING AND CONTINUING INCREASE
IN NUMBER OF BOAT REFUGEES AND URGED ADMITTANCE FOR
PERMANENT SETTLEMENT IN TAIWAN OF SIGNI-
FICANT NUMBER ETHNIC CHINESE BOAT REFUGEES FROM SOUTH-
EAST ASIA, SPECIFICALLY TO ALLOW ALL OF 600 PRESENTLY
IN THAILAND TO RESETTLE PERMANENTLY IN TAIWAN AND TO
ALLOW ADMISSION TO TAIWAN FOR RESETTLEMENT OF
FUTURE ETHNIC CHINESE ARRIVING THERE. I ALSO OFFERED
U.S. COOPERATION IN PROCESSING, ETC. TO FACILITATE
RESETTLEMENT PROCESS. AT CONCLUSION MEETING I LEFT
INFORMAL AIDE MEMOIRE COPY OF WHICH IS BEING POUCHED.
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2. MINISTER SHEN AFTER LENGTHY REVIEW GROC REFUGEE PRO-
GRAMS AND POLICIES SAID THAT OUR REQUEST CONCERNING 600
BOAT REFUGEES FROM THAILAND WILL BE GIVEN CAREFUL CON-
SIDERATION; HE NEVERTHELESS EXPRESSED HESITATION ABOUT
GROC BEING ABLE TO MAKE "OPEN-ENDED" COMMITMENT FOR
RESETTLEMENT ETHNIC CHINESE BOAT REFUGEES FROM THAILAND
AND ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

3. SHEN FIRST DESCRIBED GROC CONTINUING PROGRAM FOR
GRANTING OF REFUGE TO BOAT CASES REACHING TAIWAN. THIS

RELATES TO "FIRST COUNTRY" ASYLUM ON TAIWAN AND ALSO RESETTLEMENT OF BOAT REFUGEES OF CHINESE ORIGIN ARRIVING TAIWAN AS DESCRIBED IN EARLIER MESSAGES. MINISTER SHEN STATED ARRIVALS FROM BEGINNING OF PROGRAM UNTIL PRESENT TOTAL ABOUT 221, INCLUDING 33 OVER PAST WEEK. (FULLER DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED SEPTTEL.)

4. FOREIGN MINISTER THEN DESCRIBED STATUS AND PROSPECTS OF PROGRAM WHICH IS MANAGED WITH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HELP. THIS PROGRAM HAS IN MAY AND JUNE THUS FAR MOVED FROM SAIGON VIA BANGKOK TO TAIWAN ABOUT 300 MORE DOCUMENTED ROC NATIONALS. SHEN ANTICIPATES ABOUT 1500 ADDITIONAL PERSONS WILL BE CARED FOR IN THIS PROGRAM IF IT CAN CONTINUE TO COMPLETION. HE STRONGLY URGED WE TREAT PROGRAM AS CONFIDENTIAL SINCE SVR MIGHT WELL TURN IT OFF IF IT IS GIVEN PUBLICITY. (FURTHER DETAILS THIS PROGRAM ALSO WILL BE PROVIDED SEPTTEL.) I ACKNOWLEDGED CONTRIBUTION THIS PROGRAM IS MAKING BUT NOTED THAT IT RELATES TO ROC'S OWN CITIZENS WHOM THEY NATURALLY WOULD BE REPATRIATING BUT UNFORTUNATELY DOES NOT ALLEVIATE EMERGENCY PROBLEM OF BOAT REFUGEES.

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5. IN PRESENTING GROC POSITION FOREIGN MINISTER SEVERAL TIMES EMPHASIZED HIS COUNTRY'S VULNERABILITY WITH REGARD TO RECEIVING ETHNIC CHINESE FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA AND HE EXPLAINED HOW IN THE PAST GROC HAS HAD TO RESIST EFFORTS TO EFFECT REPATRIATION FROM THAT REGION OF NUMBERS WHICH COULD EASILY SWAMP TAIWAN. HE REITERATED GROC WILL GIVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO OUR REQUEST BUT WANTED TO EXPLAIN THIS AMONG OTHER DIFFICULTIES THEY FACED IN THIS CONNECTION AND NEED TO AVOID SETTING DANGEROUS PRECEDENT. IN CONCLUSION I AGAIN EMPHASIZED EMERGENCY NATURE OF BOAT REFUGEE SITUATION AND RISK THAT IF ALL CONCERNED DID NOT COOPERATE IN MEETING PROBLEM WE MIGHT AGAIN FIND TEMPORARY REFUGE PROVIDED BY THAILAND AND OTHERS CLOSED OFF AND SHIP CAPTAINS AGAIN UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO HELP. UNGER

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Message Attributes

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